



August 21, 2020

Dear Congressman Aderholt,

We're hoping this letter finds you safe and well.

On behalf of the ten largest cities in the state of Alabama, we are writing to urgently request your support for direct federal assistance due to the COVID-19 crisis.

As you well know, the human toll of the pandemic has been devastating. Our communities have lost neighbors, friends and family members. And even as we seek to heal from these losses, we are also forced to confront the very harsh realities of the crushing economic impact on our Cities.

As Mayors, it is our responsibility to employ and support first responders – our firefighters and police officers – who keep our communities safe. We support the public health and public education infrastructure to make our communities strong. We pick up garbage, pave streets and fill potholes, all things our residents expect and need to take care of their families and get back and forth to work.

Because of the national downturn, our ability to provide these most basic and vital services is in very real jeopardy.

Prior to COVID-19, our economies were running at full throttle: teeming with development, recruiting new businesses to the state, launching new enterprises with young entrepreneurs – especially in the tech sector and burnishing Alabama's reputation as a state that is open for business. At the same time, we build unprecedented alliances between local leadership. In Jefferson County, more than twenty Mayors signed an economic cooperation agreement. And, the Big 5 Mayors association has now become the Big 10 Mayors association. We are working together to building a stronger Alabama.

We are not making this request as Democrats or Republicans, red Cities or blue Cities, nor majority black or majority white Cities – we are simply Alabama Cities, American Cities. More than 75% of all of our state's residents live and work in our metropolitan areas. We generate more than 80% of the state's GDP. We are proud to be the economic, education and innovation engines of Alabama.

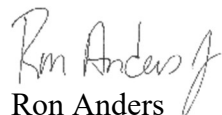
As our leaders work to jumpstart our state's economy, we are firmly convinced that there is no Alabama recovery unless our largest cities recover. We are doing everything we can do to provide all of the support our businesses need to survive, and then to thrive. We are seeking your help to assist us in pressing through this crisis.

We understand the amazing difficulty of the decisions you face and are very appreciative of your consideration. Should you have any questions, we stand ready to respond.

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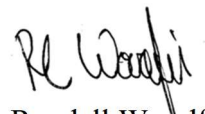
Sincerely,



Ron Anders  
Auburn Mayor



Tommy Battle  
Huntsville Mayor



Randall Woodfin  
Birmingham Mayor



Paul Finley  
Madison Mayor



Tab Bowling  
Decatur Mayor



Sandy Stimpson  
Mobile Mayor



Mark Saliba  
Dothan Mayor



Steven Reed  
Montgomery Mayor



Frank Brocato  
Hoover Mayor



Walt Maddox  
Tuscaloosa Mayor



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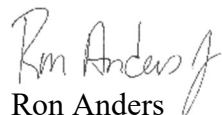
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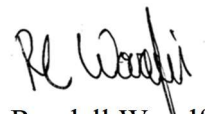
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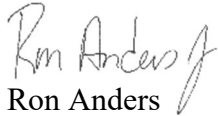
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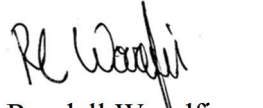
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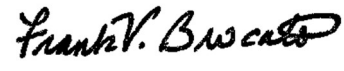
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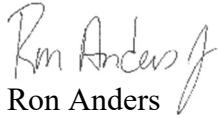
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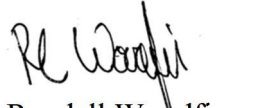
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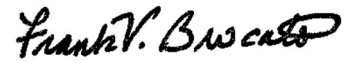
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Mark Saliba  
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Walt Maddox  
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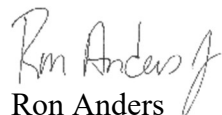
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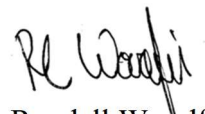
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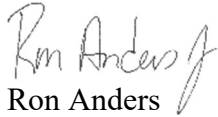
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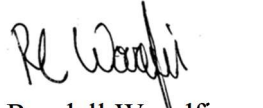
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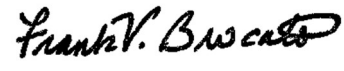
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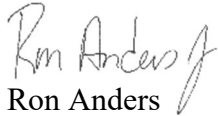
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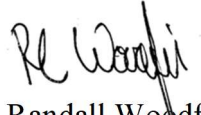
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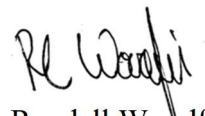
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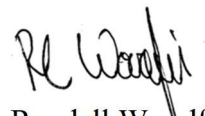
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Walt Maddox  
Tuscaloosa Mayor



Greg Cochran, CAE  
Executive Director



Sonny Brasfield,  
Executive Director

August 4, 2020

Honorable Richard Shelby  
Russell Senate Office Building Room 304  
Washington, DC 20510-0103

Dear Senator Shelby,

On behalf of the Alabama League of Municipalities (ALM) and the Association of County Commissions of Alabama (ACCA), we ask for your additional support aiding our local governments in recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. Together, municipalities and counties represent more than 500 local governments, which are responsible for the delivery of essential community services such as 9-1-1 and first response, emergency management, law enforcement, permitting/inspections and economic development.

Through the recently enacted CARES Act, your leadership provided the swift action needed to support local governments at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, after more than four months of public health restrictions, the impact on local governments persists. It is becoming clear that the impacts of COVID-19 will continue to be felt across Alabama, and future revenue shortfalls at the local level will continue to incur. Municipalities and counties are rightfully anxious as they face the challenges associated with opening schools, preparing for economic development and tourism opportunities, administering the 2020 elections, and housing and caring for the growing number of jail inmates.

We encourage you to support policies that allow for local governments to continue providing essential services to their communities during these uncertain times. An effective economic recovery and response to the pandemic requires robust local governments. Any future legislation should incorporate the following crucial points for maintaining robust local government:

- Protecting local governments' use of funding from state restrictions outside of those restrictions prescribed by Congress and Treasury guidance;
- Codifying Treasury's guidance related to reimbursement for public health and public safety employee payroll and benefits;
- Raising the threshold for a Single Audit with respect to a local government that receives federal funds from only CARES Act monies during its fiscal year;

- Dedicating a minimum of 30 percent of a state's Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) allocation directly for local governments' use toward revenue shortfalls;
- Extending the date for using the money from Dec. 30, 2020, to 150 days after the end of the state's fiscal year 2021 to allow for revenue shortfalls; and
- Implementing accountability measures by codifying the eligibility, reporting, recordkeeping and auditing requirements for the usage of relief funds distributed to local governments.

Earlier this year, ALM launched the COVID-19 Revenue Loss Portal. Since the portal's launch, ALM has received participation from 54 municipalities with 117 entries that include shortfalls from the months of March, April, May and June as it relates to sales and use taxes, motor fuel taxes, lodgings taxes, rental taxes and occupational taxes. As of July 15, the total revenue shortfalls of participating municipalities is more than \$41 million.

Every penny associated with the revenue shortfalls mentioned above impacts a municipality's ability to provide critical quality of life services. The CRF mitigated direct costs associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, local governments face the challenge of economic recovery and the damage of revenue shortfalls to their budgets.

In addition to the COVID-19 Revenue Loss Portal, ALM surveyed members on the impacts of revenue shortfalls on employment and community services. As a result of the revenue shortfalls, 85 percent of respondents expect to delay or cancel major purchases, and more than 70 percent indicated plans to both freeze hiring and eliminate/reduce staff budgets for travel, professional development, etc.

In May, ACCA released a report on the cost of counties' continued service and protection to citizens amid the COVID-19 pandemic. While adhering to state and federal health orders and guidelines in order to protect their local communities, counties have continued to maintain the roads and bridges that make up a majority of the state's transportation infrastructure; maintain order in localities through the patrol of law enforcement officers and operation of jails; house and care for the state's inmates who have been refused by the Alabama Department of Corrections; and provide access to essential services in the courthouses and through the court system. Certainly, the result of this continued service and protection has come at a steep cost – a cost that is quickly depleting county budgets.

In the coming months, county costs from COVID-19 response will continue to rise as counties' limited streams of revenue remain on the decline, together causing irreparable damage to the future of county government operations. Without the support of the federal government, counties will soon be forced to decide which existing services must be drastically reduced or

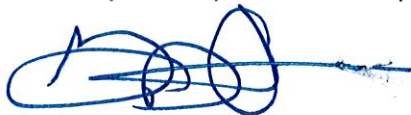
altogether cut and even whether the opportunity exists to continue protecting citizens from the current public health crisis.

Without a doubt, the inability for local governments to provide expected services spills over into the economy. According to a recent Barron's article, in the years following the great recession, state and local government cuts to infrastructure investment and public services shaved off more than one percent in GDP. This is further highlighted by comments from both the current and past chairs of the Federal Reserve that state and local governments are an important part of economic recovery.

Local governments are a critical component of the economic engine of this state, and the CRF does not address revenue shortfalls – which is necessary for the continued provision of community services.

We are ready to assist your efforts in any capacity but especially as a means for establishing communications and coordination between federal authorities and local leaders. Please contact ALM's Executive Director, Greg Cochran, at [gcochran@almonline.org](mailto:gcochran@almonline.org) or ACCA's Executive Director, Sonny Brasfield, at [SBrasfield@alabamacounties.org](mailto:SBrasfield@alabamacounties.org) with any questions.

Thank you for your leadership.



Gregory D. Cochran  
Executive Director, Alabama League of Municipalities



Sonny Brasfield  
Executive Director, Association of County Commissions of Alabama



# The Economy and Cities: WHAT AMERICA'S LOCAL LEADERS ARE SEEING

Local leaders understand the needs of their residents and are best positioned to make emergency management decisions related to allocation of resources.

The federal government **MUST** act to ensure every city, town and village impacted by this pandemic—regardless of size—has direct access to emergency funding.

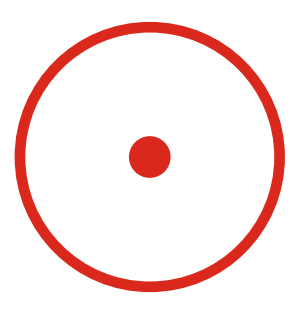
## UNDER THE CURRENT CARES ACT:



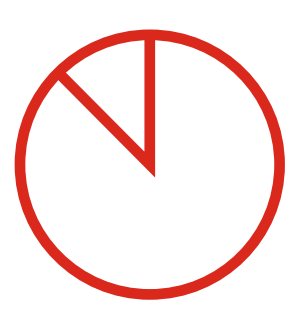
Only municipalities of more than **500,000** residents will receive direct funding through the Coronavirus Relief Fund



Only **36/19,000** American cities, towns and villages are 500,000+



That equals less than **0.5%** of all municipalities



And only represents **14%** of the country's total population

**MUNICIPALITIES OF ALL SIZES WILL FEEL THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COVID-19.**  
Nearly 100% of cities with populations above 50,000 will see a revenue decline this year.

**87%**  
of municipalities <50,000  
anticipate a revenue shortfall this year

**100%**  
of municipalities 200k-499,999  
anticipate a revenue shortfall this year

**98%**  
of municipalities 50k-199,999  
anticipate a revenue shortfall this year

**100%**  
of municipalities 500,000+  
anticipate a revenue shortfall this year

**96%** OF ALL CITIES REPORT THAT BUDGET SHORTFALLS ARE THE RESULT OF UNANTICIPATED REVENUE DECLINES.

## PRIMARY FACTOR FOR SHORTFALL

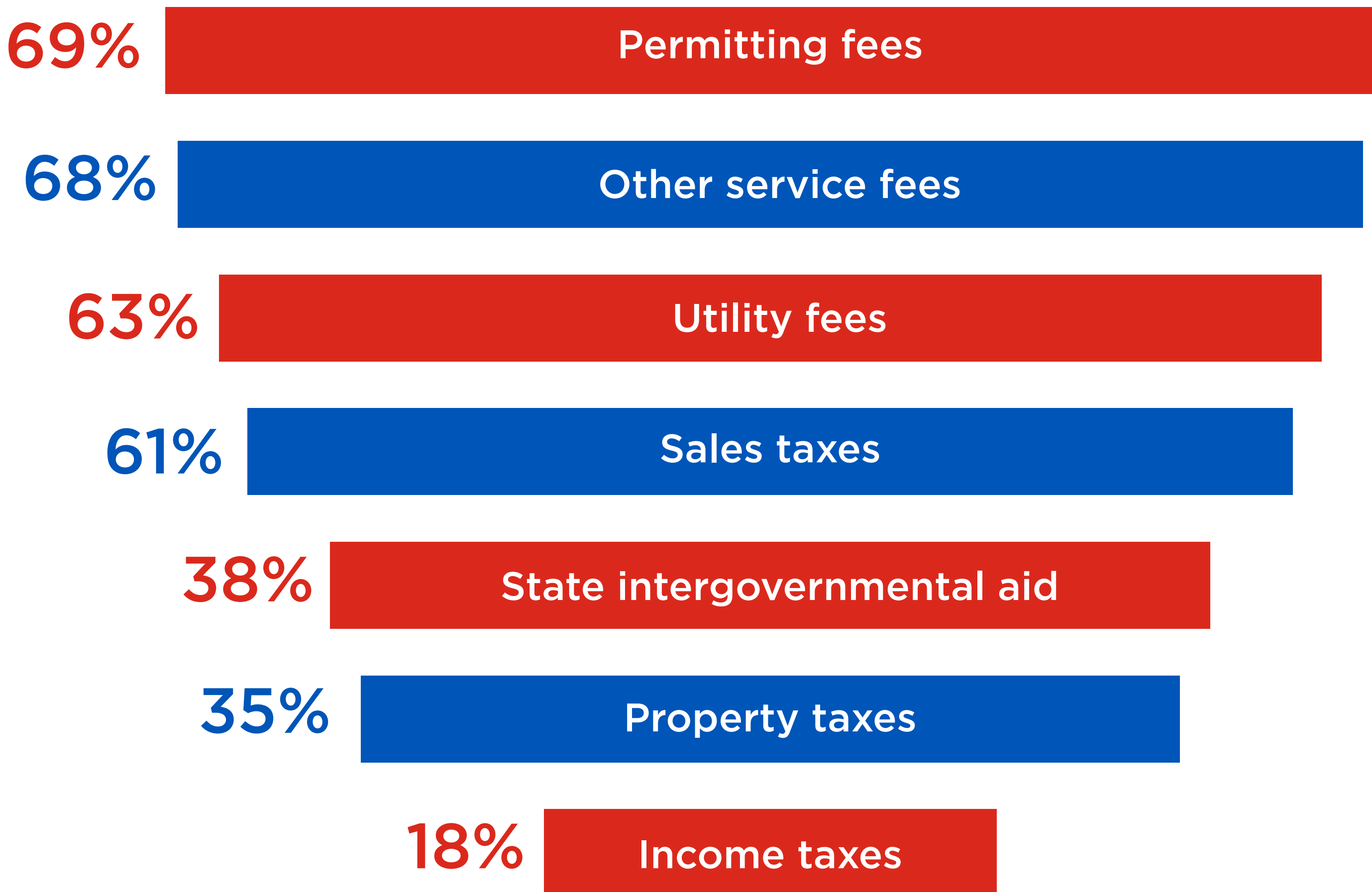


**53%**  
UNANTICIPATED REVENUE  
DECLINE ONLY

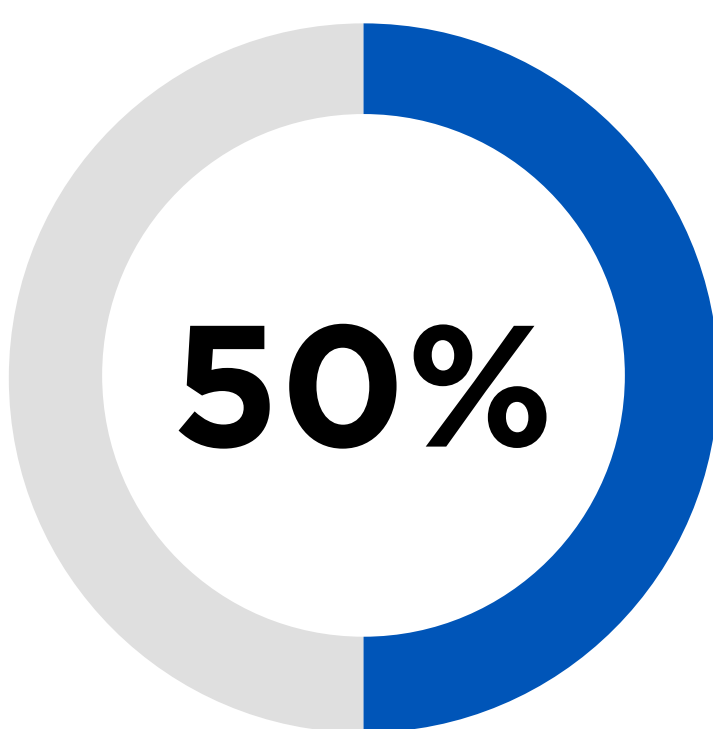


**43%**  
UNANTICIPATED REVENUE  
DECLINES AND UNANTICIPATED  
EXPENDITURE INCREASES

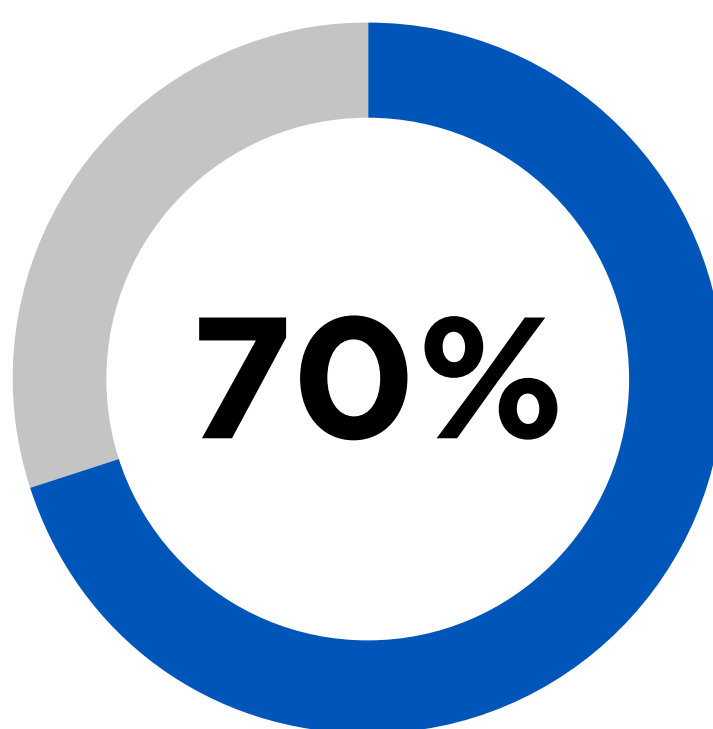
LOCAL LEADERS ARE REPORTING AN IMMEDIATE ECONOMIC IMPACT FROM LOSS OF REVENUE SOURCES THEY DEPEND ON TO FUND ESSENTIAL SERVICES.



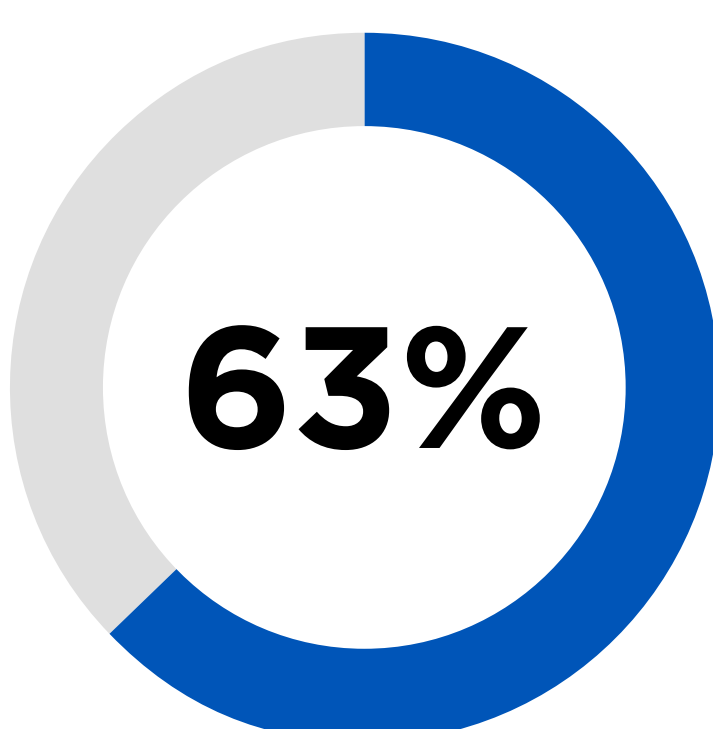
PUBLIC SERVICES WILL BE IMPACTED BY THE ECONOMIC STRAIN OF COVID-19.



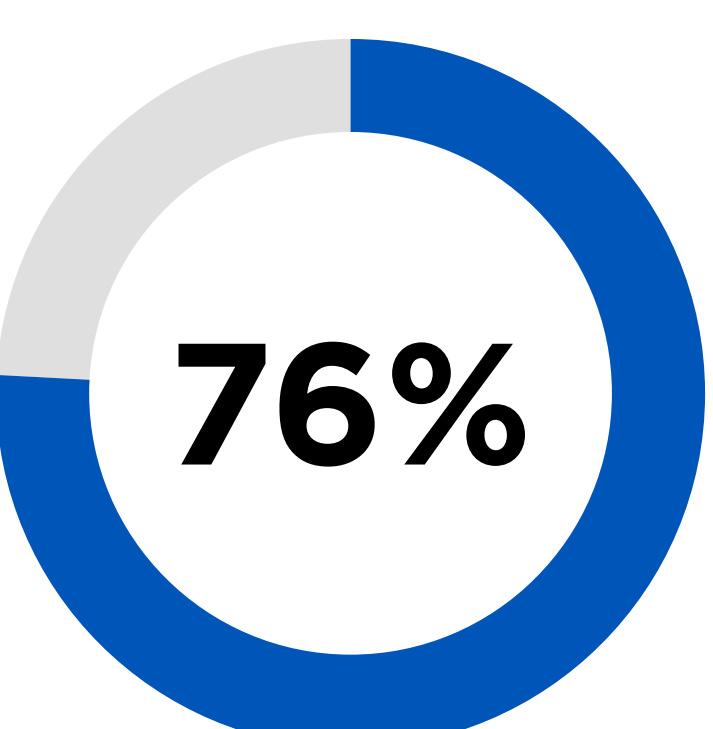
of municipalities <50,000 are anticipating having to cut public services.



of municipalities 200k-499,999 are anticipating having to cut public services.



of municipalities 50k-199,999 are anticipating having to cut public services.



of municipalities 500,000+ are anticipating having to cut public services.

MORE THAN **HALF** OF ALL CITIES OF ALL ALL SIZES REPORTED THAT POLICE WILL BE AFFECTED.

CORONAVIRUS WILL HAVE A STAGGERING IMPACT ON ALL MUNICIPAL EMPLOYMENT.

## THERE WILL BE FURLOUGHS



**26%** OF MUNICIPALITIES <50,000 will have to furlough their employees

**55%** OF MUNICIPALITIES 50K-199,999 will have to furlough their employees

**54%** OF MUNICIPALITIES 200K-499,999 will have to furlough their employees

**59%** OF MUNICIPALITIES 500,000+ will have to furlough their employees

## AND THERE WILL BE LAYOFFS

**26%** OF MUNICIPALITIES <50,000 will have to lay off their employees

**36%** OF MUNICIPALITIES 50K-199,999 will have to lay off their employees

**39%** OF MUNICIPALITIES 200K-499,999 will have to lay off their employees

**47%** OF MUNICIPALITIES 500,000+ will have to lay off their employees

